Q&A

Everything You Need To Know About Passkeys

Why is everyone talking about passkeys?

A passkey is a more secure replacement for passwords, and it stops phishing in its tracks.

Phishing
When bad guys try to steal your credential through deception.

What are passkeys?

You might have heard passkeys are new. Not true! A passkey is just a FIDO credential, and those have been around for years. FIDO credentials are good at blocking phishing attacks.

FIDO
An open security standard backed by the FIDO Alliance, a group focused on moving away from a password-based system.

Credential
The unique ID a user has that "gets you through the gate" when you log on to any system.

Why are passkeys so phishing-resistant?

Passkeys pair a public key with an unguessable private key which is never shared.

Every credential is tied to a real URL, which can be verified as legitimate or not.

Every credential is registered to a real human, blocking bots or other remote attackers.

Key Takeaway
Passkeys do not allow users to authenticate on an illegitimate service or website. Attackers are denied access and cannot manipulate a FIDO-enabled passkey.

What's the difference between a passkey and an authenticator?

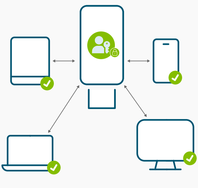
A passkey is the key itself, a digital file. An authenticator is where the passkey lives. For example, on a phone, laptop, hardware key, or other device.

Passkey

Authenticators

What's the difference between a synced passkey and a hardware-bound passkey?

Synced Passkey
Lives on a smartphone, tablet, laptop or other device where it can be copied and synced across many devices.



Hardware-bound Passkey
Lives on a USB key or other piece of hardware separate from everyday devices.

What passkeys do I use for what purpose?

Synced Passkeys	If you need...	Hardware-bound Passkeys
✓ Yes	Syncing passkey between devices	⊘ No
⊘ May not work	Platform flexibility between Apple, Google and Microsoft	✓ Yes
⊘ No	Hardware attestation	✓ Yes
✓ Yes	Shareable credentials	⊘ Not shareable
⊘ May not meet enterprise-level security and regulatory requirements.	Complies with regulations	✓ Meets strict compliance and regional certification needs.
✓ Easy to recover	Account recovery	⊘ Requires more steps
⊘ Not easily integrated	Use in higher security environments like mobile-restricted, shared workstations and "bring-your-own-device"	✓ Yes

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